

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0599

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: CONCERN AND RECOGNITION FOR AZOREAN DEMANDS

SUMMARY: SCHEDULED VISITS TO AZOREE BY TOP PORTUGUESE LEADERS
POINT UP HIGH LEVEL CONCERN AS WELL AS NEW RECOGNITION THAT
AZOREAN DEMANDS FOR INCREASED AUTONOMY ARE LEGITIMATE. END SUMMARY.

1. IN PROMINENT FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL, INFLUENTIAL SOCIALIST-
INCLINED LISDO
DAILY "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" JAN 27 EXAMINED
CURRENT POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF AZORES. "DIARI
" ASSERTED
THAT AZOREAN DEMANDS FOR AUTONOMY/INDEPENDENCE WERE SYMPTOMS
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OF WIDER BREAKDOWN OF NATIONAL "CONSENSUS", EQUALLY REFLECTED

IN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH ON CONTINENT. QUOTING
RECENT REMARKS BY POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY SEC GEN SA CARNEIRO
THAT AZORES LACKED "CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC BASE FOR
INDEPENDENCE," "DIARIO" EMPHASIZED NEED TO STRENGTHEN SENSE
OF NATIONAL UNITY NOT ONLY IN AZORES BUT THROUGHOUT PORTUGAL.
IN CASE OF AZORES, "DIARIO" ACKNOWLEDGED
MINIMUM CONDITION
FOR ACHIEVING KTTIS WOULD BE RECOGNITION OF ISLANDS' RIGHT
TO "BROAD AND LOYAL AUTONOMY." EDITORIAL NOTED THAT NAAOR
DEMOCRATIC PARTIES SHARED THIS VIEW.

2. VISITS PLANNED: AS "DIARIO" NOTED, SEVERAL TOP PORTUGUESE
POLITICAL FIGURES HAVE SCHEDULED OR ARE CONTEMPLATING TRIPS
TO AZORES IN NEAR FUTURE:

-- PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES AND PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO HAVE BOTH
EXPRESSED INTEREST IN VISITING ISLANDS AT A TIME YET TO BE
ANNOUNCED;

JAA SOCIALIST SEC GEN MARIO SOAREE WILL
STOP IN AZORES FOR SERIES
OF POLITICAL RALLIES ON HIS RETURN FROM UNITED STATES;

-- SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER LEADER GALVAO
DE MELO HAS ANNOUNCED HE WILL SOON VISIT ARCHIPELAGO;

-- EDUCATION MINISTER VICTOR ALVES FLEW TO THE AZORES JAN 27
TO SWEAR IN NEW DIRECTOR OF AZOREAN POLYTECHNICAL INSTITUTE.

3. COMMENT: HIGH LEVEL VISITS POINT UP CONCERN RE AUTONOMY/IN-
DEPENDENCE ISSUE, AS WELL AS A MATURING OF CONTINENTAL A
AFFAIRS
TOWARD THE AZORES. RESPONSIBLE PORTUGUESE ARE LESS AND LESS
INCLINED TO VIEW
AZOREAN DEMANDS FOR AUTONOMY, SIMPLY IN TERMS OF LOCAL
"REACTIONARY" ATTEMPTS TO PRESERVE PRIVILEGES. THERE IS A
GROWING UNDERSTANDING THAT AZOREAN COMPLAINTS HAVE THEIR ROOTS
IN LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES TOWARD THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT,
AND A RECOGNITION
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THAT, IF THE ISLANDS ARE
REMAIN PORTUGUESE,
THEY MUST HAVE SUFFICIENT AUTONOMY TO ORDER THEIR OWN AFFAIRS.
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